

# Mark 3:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables,  
How can Satan cast out Satan?

## Analysis

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Jesus 'called them unto him' for direct confrontation and teaching 'in parables'—brief illustrative stories conveying spiritual truth. His rhetorical question 'How can Satan cast out Satan?' exposes illogical accusation. The question assumes Satan's self-interest—he wouldn't undermine his kingdom. Jesus' parabolic method accomplishes dual purposes: revealing truth to receptive hearts while concealing from hardened hearts (Mark 4:11-12). His willingness to engage opponents demonstrates patient teaching despite hostility.

## Historical Context

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Rabbinic teaching regularly employed parables (Hebrew *mashal*, Greek *parabolē*). Jesus' parables differed in directness and authority—He didn't cite previous authorities but spoke with inherent authority. Parabolic teaching served apologetic purposes in controversial settings—forcing listeners to draw conclusions rather than rejecting direct claims. 'How can Satan cast out Satan?' employs *reductio ad absurdum*, demonstrating logical impossibility.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' patient engagement model gracious apologetics?
2. What role should logic and reason play in defending Christian truth?
3. How can you use questions to expose false reasoning while pointing toward truth?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ	προσκαλεσάμενος	αὐτοῖς	ἐν	παραβολαῖς	ἔλεγεν
<b>And</b>	<b>he called</b>	<b>them</b>	<b>in</b>	<b>parables</b>	<b>unto him and said</b>
G2532	G4341	G846	G1722	G3850	G3004
αὐτοῖς	Πῶς	δύναται	Σατανᾶν	Σατανᾶν	ἐκβάλλειν
<b>them</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>can</b>	<b>Satan</b>	<b>Satan</b>	<b>cast out</b>
G846	G4459	G1410	G4567	G4567	G1544

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 13:34** (Parallel theme): All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

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